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This is FYI.

Attached is a copy of a speech given a few days ago by Ambassador Nitze. I think you will find it interesting reading.

Of particular interest to me was the text on page 6 and page 33 regarding verification. Several of these ideas you have heard before.

If there is more I can do for you here, please call.

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THE OBJECTIVES OF ARMS CONTROL

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THE 1985 ALASTAIR BUCHAN MEMORIAL LECTURE

THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES

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Introduction

It is a privilege for me to deliver the 1985 Alastair Buchan Memorial Lecture.

In the 1950s, during the transition from the Truman Administration to the Eisenhower Administration, Alastair was the Washington correspondent for the Observer. He had a clear, wide-ranging mind. He was both a skeptic and an idealist. He had high aims for the West; he was troubled by the manifest shortcomings of Western policy.

At one point it became evident that he was under deep intellectual strain. For a time he came to live with my wife Phyllis and me in Washington. Over many discussions, the nature of his strain became evident.

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For further information contact Hank Grady, 202/632-6545.

During his youth his father had been Governor General of Canada, and Alastair had developed a deep affection for Canada. However, he was English by ancestry and had been educated at Oxford. Later he had come to the United States during the Truman years and had been deeply impressed by the generosity and wisdom of American policy of those days.

As a result, he had difficulty making up his mind which was his primary loyalty, and which were his secondary loyalties. He finally settled the matter with a clear decision; his primary loyalty was to England.

It was then that his great days as the first director of the International Institute for Strategic Studies began. He has made an immense contribution to the wisdom and the coherence of Western thought and policy, both then and as Montague Burton Professor of International Relations at Oxford.

One of the subjects which Alastair and I used to discuss was the question of the proper aims and objectives of arms control. It is that subject which I propose to address this evening. I will begin with a summary of my views, then attempt to illuminate the principal issues by reviewing my recollections of how they arose in the past, and conclude with a look toward the future.

Arms Control Objectives

The primary security objective of the United States and, I believe, of the Western Alliance in general is to reduce the risk of war while maintaining our right to live in freedom. Consistent with this objective, we have long based our security policy on deterrence, that is, prevention of conflict by convincing a potential opponent that the problems, risks and costs of aggression would far outweigh any possible gains he might hope to achieve.

In this context, arms control should be viewed as one element of our security policy. It complements the measures that we must take unilaterally, such as maintaining weapons and forces necessary for an adequate deterrent.

Arms control is not a substitute or replacement for adequate defenses. Indeed, experience indicates that, while arms control hopefully can play an important role in enhancing our security and bringing about a more stable strategic relationship, what we are able and willing to do for ourselves is more important. It provides the necessary foundation on which effective deterrence and arms control must rest. I remember one Soviet negotiator during SALT I saying, "We will do whatever is necessary to deter you; whether you are able to deter us is up to you."

The objective of reducing the risk of war is intrinsically linked to deterrence. Whether or not we have arms control agreements, it is necessary that the United States and its allies have sufficient military forces, both conventional and nuclear, to deter an armed attack by the Soviet Union and its associates.

Likewise, the Soviet Union undoubtedly is determined to have what they assess to be fully adequate military capabilities, whether or not there are arms control agreements between us. It has been and is our belief, however, that a relationship of offsetting deterrent capabilities can be made more secure, stable and reliable -- and perhaps less costly -- if we and the Soviets can agree on effective, equal and verifiable arms control constraints.

There are two important corollaries to the objective of reducing the risk of war through effective deterrence. These are the objectives of assuring parity, or at least rough equivalence between the capabilities of the two sides, and of assuring crisis stability, that is, reducing the incentives that a side might have in a crisis to strike first, or in peacetime to provoke a crisis that might lead to a military confrontation.

Some commentators tend to emphasize one of these goals or the other. To my mind they are interrelated; we cannot tolerate either significant inequality or substantial crisis instability.

The greatest strain on deterrence could arise in a crisis, or a series of crises, stemming from a complex of factors difficult to control. In such a period, our military forces as a whole must have the necessary characteristics of effectiveness, flexibility, survivability and diversity to dissuade the Soviet Union from contemplating reckless action.

We cannot be confident that an array of US and allied forces manifestly inferior to those of the Soviet Union would provide an adequate deterrent to reckless action in such a period. Similarly, forces of roughly equal capability could be inadequate if a significant portion of them were vulnerable to destruction in a surprise or preemptive attack.

Consistent with the objectives of promoting stability and rough equality, arms control should aim to achieve sharp reductions in the levels of armaments. Reductions per se may not always be good; for example, reductions in the number of launchers can be destabilizing if they increase the ratio of warheads to vulnerable launchers. But well-conceived proposals embodying reductions which bring about improvements in the proper indices can do much to enhance stability.

Finally, the panoply of arms control agreements should deal with the relationship between offensive and defensive systems. I will return later to this subject in some detail.

For arms control agreements to be effective, there are a number of additional requirements. The agreements should be reasonably precise and unambiguous in their terms. While no agreement can be made completely unambiguous, the less ambiguity, the better.

Moreover, we should have confidence in our ability to verify adherence to an agreement's provisions. And the panoply of arms control agreements should be sufficiently comprehensive so that their constraints cannot be readily circumvented. And finally, we must have confidence that the parties will abide by the agreements into which they have entered, a requirement that has become increasingly important in view of findings of Soviet non-compliance with existing arms control arrangements.

In addition to the foregoing objectives and requirements, our arms control policy must merit the sustained support of Western publics, and of Western Congressional and Parliamentary bodies. In the absence of such support, the Soviets will seek to drive wedges and exploit divisions; indeed, tough Soviet bargaining stances have always been complemented by hard-nosed propaganda and active measures campaigns designed to bring about unilateral Western concessions. Such public and legislative support will also be essential to carrying out the unilateral defense programs that must necessarily proceed in parallel with arms control.

These then -- in my view -- comprise the basic objectives and requirements of arms control policy.

History as It Illuminates the Issues Concerning Objectives

Let me review the issues and conflicting views as to the objectives of arms control as they have evolved over the years following the dawn of the nuclear age in 1945.

Immediately after the Japanese surrender, President Truman asked some of us who had been engaged in the Strategic Bombing Survey in Europe to undertake a comparable mission with respect to the war in the Pacific. He asked us not only to report on the effects of air power in the Pacific war, but in particular to survey in detail the effects of the atomic weapons used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We were also asked to offer recommendations for US national security in light of modern weapons, especially nuclear weapons.

We recruited a distinguished team of physicists, engineers and other scientists who measured in minute detail the effects of blast, radiation, heat, and fall-out on people, buildings, and on the Japanese will and ability to continue the war. The general public reaction after Hiroshima and Nagasaki had been that the destructiveness of atomic weapons was absolute and immeasurable. We were nevertheless directed to measure precisely what those weapons had done, and what they had not done.

We were all shocked by the devastation of the two cities. The casualties and damage were immense. The destruction at Hiroshima was tremendous; part of Nagasaki survived, as it was shielded by a hill. Even at Hiroshima, however, the destruction was not absolute; trains were running through Hiroshima within forty-eight hours after the attack. Our computations, based on the effects of those relatively primitive bombs, indicated that the advent of atomic weapons had increased the potential power of air attack against undefended cities by 100- to 200-fold.

The policy implications we drew were several. Nuclear weapons provided an increase in the power of offensive weapons by more than a hundred fold, and future technology could be expected to increase it by another order of magnitude. In war the temptation for an aggressor possessing nuclear weapons to employ a preemptive strategy could be immense. The importance of being able to control the relevant air space, which had been of high importance in a war fought with conventional weapons, would be far greater in a world with nuclear arms.

We were faced with a grim realization. Even if we had very good offensive and defensive capabilities and a nuclear war were nevertheless to occur, we could not be sure that some weapons would not get through, and even a few could cause immense damage.

Therefore, our policy should be one of maintaining a deterrent posture adequate to assure that no war would occur. Since we could not guarantee the means fully to protect our society from nuclear attack, we should develop forces that would make clear to a potential opponent that he could not achieve military gains through launching an attack against us or our allies, and that the consequences for him of launching his attack would be so horrible that the potential gains of such aggression would not be worthwhile.

One important issue remained. Some thought the terror of nuclear weapons was such that their very existence would in itself prevent war. This view was held by those who considered the destructiveness of nuclear weapons to be absolute. Bernard Brodie was the first and most eloquent proponent of this position. He also argued that there was an absolute dichotomy between the view that the purpose of military forces was to deter, and the view that their purpose was to deny an aggressor the possibility of military success.

The alternative position was that deterrence would be greatly strengthened by the ability to face an enemy with military capabilities and a strategy that would deny him the ability or perception that he might successfully prosecute a war-winning strategy, and emerge from a war in a predominant military position.

This issue of what is required to assure deterrence -- the mere existence of nuclear weapons or a manifest military capability sufficient to deny the enemy any realistic prospect of achieving his objectives -- remains with us to this day. I believed then and I believe now that the latter position is the sensible one.

The question remains, now as then, how to maintain a sure ability to retaliate with devastating nuclear destruction but concurrently to increase our ability to deny an aggressor the possibility of military success, and thus reduce our dependence on the threat of mutually devastating nuclear destruction.

The Interest in Nuclear Disarmament

Shortly after nuclear weapons appeared, strong interest arose in negotiating the elimination of all such arms. Immediately after the war's end, the Acheson-Lilienthal report proposed a world government restricted in its authority to nuclear matters, but including everything to do with those matters. The idea was roughly translated into the Baruch Plan for the international control of atomic weapons and technology, and offered to the Soviets. They would have no part of it.

Interest in nuclear disarmament continued however. Some years later, before the United Nations Committee on Disarmament, the Soviets presented a program for what they called "general and complete disarmament." But it soon became clear that their position was purely for propaganda purposes; they offered no practical way to get to their stated end.

While "general and complete disarmament" did not then appear to be a realistic or achievable goal, the Soviets nevertheless were reaping significant benefits in the propaganda field. The United States, the United Kingdom, France and Canada in response changed their position to advocate "phased total disarmament," which meant approximately the same thing as "general and complete disarmament," but offered a somewhat more practical approach.

From that point on the propaganda battle was a stand-off. But the talks on the subject had little to do with actual steps toward the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons, or toward reducing the risk of war.

The Shift Toward Arms Control and Limited Measures

When the Kennedy Administration took office, the debate between the West and the Soviet Union concerning "general and complete disarmament" versus "phased total disarmament" was continuing.

Thought in the Administration began to turn to the possibility of negotiating agreements more limited in their scope, with the hope that success in these agreements would open the possibility of more comprehensive agreements later. In other words, our interest turned toward arms control rather than disarmament.

Instead of total disarmament -- in which security would have been entrusted to something akin to a world government -- we set our sights on a more realistic plane. We accepted the prospect of deterrence based on the threat of nuclear retaliation, and sought to make the strategic balance safer, more stable, and perhaps less costly.

As a result, the Limited Test Ban Treaty, the Outer Space Treaty, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and the Seabed Arms Control Treaty came into being. These agreements were important in their own right, but they were peripheral to the central issue of achieving an agreement which would serve materially to reduce the risk of war.

Up until 1963, thought on arms control had concentrated on multilateral arrangements; it was thought that a bilateral agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union would not be sufficiently comprehensive, and could lead to possible circumvention and undercutting by other nations. But in the spring of 1963, some of us in the Administration came to the conclusion that we weren't apt to get an international agreement on the central issues unless and until we could work out the main issues bilaterally with the Soviets.

We prepared a paper on the issues involved in a bilateral agreement limiting strategic nuclear delivery vehicles between the United States and the Soviet Union. The analysis suggested that the total elimination of nuclear weapons was not the optimum solution. This was because nuclear technology had become too widely known; the risk of clandestine or third-country production of nuclear weapons was too great. It seemed that a level of perhaps 500 strategic nuclear weapons on each side would provide a more stable and predictable future than none at all.

Then Secretary of Defense McNamara agreed with these conclusions and took them seriously. This helped set the stage for his proposal to Kosygin at Glassboro in June 1967 that we begin bilateral nuclear arms control negotiations. By 1967 the Soviets had come to the conclusion that such negotiations "might not be impossible." The invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 temporarily made them impossible; the SALT I negotiations, as such, did not begin until the fall of 1969.

SALT I and SALT II

SALT represented what we hoped would be a mutual effort to achieve effective arms control constraints providing for a stable strategic relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union at lower levels of arms.

In the late 1960s, we were completing our intercontinental ballistic missile and submarine-launched ballistic missile deployment programs, and were pursuing an active anti-ballistic missile program. The Soviets also had vigorous -- and growing -- programs in both the offensive and defensive fields. With respect to ABM, however, we in the United States were coming to the conclusion that the state of the technology at the time was such that ABM systems were not very reliable and could be overcome by deploying additional offensive systems at substantially lesser cost.

Deployment of such ABM systems might thus, it was feared, encourage a proliferation of offensive arms. Were defenses limited, on the other hand, it might be possible to work out reductions and tight limitations on offensive nuclear weapons. We therefore were prepared stringently to limit ABM systems.

SALT I produced the ABM Treaty and the Interim Agreement on Offensive Arms. We believed that those measures would be helpful to the security of both sides. That belief was based on three principal assumptions:

-- first, that the constraints on ballistic missile defenses, particularly those on large phased-array radars, would prevent break-out or circumvention;

-- second, that both sides would adhere to the letter and intent of the agreements; and

-- third, that with defensive systems severely limited, it would be possible in the following few years to negotiate comprehensive limits on strategic offensive forces, and to establish a reliable deterrent balance at reduced levels.

We believed that those assumptions were shared by both sides.

The ABM Treaty seemed to me to be a useful and equitable agreement. It constrained not only the interceptor launchers, which were relatively simple and cheap, and could be easily stored and rapidly deployed. More significantly, the Treaty limited large phased-array radars -- which were expensive and took years to build; were one side to build such a radar in a manner not permitted by the Treaty, the other side would have considerable warning time to challenge the action and, if necessary, take countermeasures. The ABM Treaty offered promise for enhancing stability by setting the stage for comprehensive limitations on offensive arms.

Unfortunately, a number of Soviet actions since 1972 -- such as the construction of an early warning radar at Krasnoyarsk in violation of constraints on such radars provided by the ABM Treaty -- have undermined the first two assumptions. They call into serious question Soviet intentions with regard to possible break-out, as well as Soviet willingness to comply with arms control arrangements when Soviet military priorities are not consonant with them.

We were also disappointed with regard to the third assumption; we could not get the Soviets to agree to tight limitations on offensive arms comparable to those applied to ABM systems, or reductions in such arms. Indeed, limiting defenses did not appear to have any effect on the Soviet offensive build-up.

Part of the problem was that the Soviets were doing well with respect to offensive systems. We had ceased building new ICBMs, ballistic missile submarines and heavy bombers some years earlier; we were improving them through qualitative changes. The Soviet Union was actively deploying large numbers and new types of ICBMs and SLBMs. Momentum thus tended to favor the Soviets; they saw no reason to sign a piece of paper which would cause them to forgo that advantage.

The 1972 SALT Interim Agreement purported to freeze the offensive balance at the then-existing level. In fact, it did no such thing. It froze the number of operational ballistic missile launchers and those the Soviets claimed were under construction; the levels were grossly unequal. Those inequalities continue to the present day, and have become more significant as the Soviets, as some then anticipated, have caught up to us in accuracy, MIRVing, and other pertinent aspects of technology.

Our inability to negotiate tight limits on offensive arms was also in part linked to the relationship between the verifiability of an agreement and its comprehensiveness. It was our view that it would be in the interest of each side to provide sufficient information to the other so that each could verify and have confidence in the other's adherence to the terms of an agreement.

Because the Soviets refused to agree to such a cooperative approach to verification, the limitations of an agreement had to be restricted to large visible items such as missile silos and submarine missile tubes. They could not apply to smaller systems or components. Nor could they apply to the more significant -- but more difficult to monitor -- qualitative characteristics of weapons systems.

The rationale for concluding such a modest and unequal accord as the 1972 Interim Agreement were two expectations, both of which subsequently proved to be ill-founded. First, we thought the two sides could negotiate a more comprehensive agreement within the next two or three years, surely within the five-year duration of that agreement. Second, we underestimated the extent to which, and how quickly, actual Soviet force developments -- particularly MIRVing -- would take advantage of the loose offensive constraints of SALT I. Compounding these weaknesses, SALT II incorporated many of the drawbacks of its predecessor.

It is hard to make a case that the Interim Agreement or SALT II met any of the principal objectives for arms control; one would truly be hard pressed to demonstrate how they embodied rough equivalence, lowered armaments, enhanced crisis stability, or reduced the risk of war.

SALT II, as its predecessor, focused on the wrong indices of power -- launchers -- giving both sides incentives to increase the number of weapons on their missiles, with negative implications for stability. Likewise, it did not provide for rough equivalence, allowing the Soviet Union unilateral rights, such as the right to heavy ballistic missiles.

And by no means has SALT reduced armaments -- the number of warheads on US and Soviet ballistic missiles has increased since 1972; the number of warheads on Soviet ballistic missiles has increased by more than fifty percent since 1979. And taking advantage of their much superior throwweight, the Soviet capability to destroy hard targets has increased by an even greater amount. All of this has taken place within the limitations of SALT.

The shortcomings of SALT II, in particular the fact that it would not provide for significant warhead limitations, came to be widely recognized. In fact, its proponents largely fell back on the rationale that SALT II was "better than no agreement." For some of us who have worked to clarify thinking on the objectives of arms control agreements, this was a defeatist criterion; it suggested loss of confidence in our ability to maintain an adequate deterrent posture without arms control, and implied that we must therefore accept more or less what the Soviets would agree to.

In the START and INF negotiations earlier in this decade, the United States sought to rectify some of the inadequacies of the SALT experience. For example, we made warheads rather than launchers the principal units of account, and tabled positions embodying significant reductions rather than merely legitimizing existing launcher levels and permitting increased warhead levels. Unfortunately, our efforts were largely overshadowed by the Soviet campaign to split NATO over the issue of INF.

The Debate Since the Mid-1970s

From the mid-1970s on, the debate on the question of arms control objectives seems to me to have been confused and confusing.

An issue raised in the 1970s has been the idea that the principal objective of arms control should be to "stop the arms race." Yet from 1972, when the Soviets passed the United States in the number, size and throwweight of offensive missile systems, they proceeded to develop and deploy one generation after another of more modern systems. Meanwhile, we had frozen the number of our weapon systems and restrained our modernization programs.

It was to the Soviet interest to keep things that way. Their propaganda approach was and is keyed to the phrase "stop the arms race." To the extent the Soviets can use such phrases to encourage unilateral Western restraint, they can avoid serious negotiations in which they might have to concede some of their advantages.

To many in the United States, however, it seemed that the Soviets had been merely reacting to what we had done first, that they were merely catching up; if we were to stop, they would stop too. For some ten years this and the trauma and aftereffects of the Vietnam war combined to restrain the United States from responding to continuing Soviet force developments.

Over the years, however, it became increasingly clear that the Soviets were not merely reacting; they were executing a deliberate long-term program to improve their capabilities regardless of what we did. As former Secretary of Defense Brown put it, "When we build, they build; when we don't build, they build."

Today both sides express agreement on "radical reductions" as being an important objective. But, as I noted earlier, those reductions should be such that they improve stability and result in rough equality, and not the reverse. Reductions to low and equal levels of ballistic missile warheads and redressing the imbalance in destructive capability can undoubtedly enhance the strategic situation, particularly if such reductions are structured so as to encourage survivable basing for strategic systems and "de-MIRVing" of forces with a dangerous capability against hard targets. Such reductions would greatly reduce the value -- and therefore the likelihood -- of a first or preemptive strike.

Reduction in the number of launchers alone however -- without regard to the number and power of warheads -- could be grossly destabilizing. It would increase, not decrease the existing inequality between the capabilities of the two sides, and could increase the incentive to go first or preempt in a crisis.

Others began talking in the late 1970s and early 1980s of a verifiable and comprehensive nuclear freeze. If a freeze is not comprehensive, it makes the situation worse, not better, and today's situation is not good. If a freeze is comprehensive, it will both freeze the present unequal situation into the future and not be verifiable.

What has been the basic difficulty with the arms control situation? I believe it goes back to the days before SALT I. We were then ahead in most of the measures of strategic capability. But we came to the conclusion that enough was enough. It was our hope that, when the Soviets pulled even, they also would conclude that enough is enough. The evidence indicates that we were wrong.

Since 1972 the nuclear arms control problem has been one of attempting to square the circle. The Soviet side has been quite frank in saying it would not enter into an agreement which would change the correlation of strategic forces in a manner they deemed adverse to their interests. Once the Soviets judged the military correlation of forces had become favorable, they were adamant in refusing to consider any agreement which would result in rough equality or which would improve crisis stability. But any agreement which would not lead to these results was flawed from the point of view of the West.

My view is that we should get back to fundamentals. The issues are complex, but not too complex. Four really is greater than two. The Soviet leaders are not mad; they look to their interests through eyes trained in the Marxist-Leninist approach. Many of them are excellent logicians, strategists, mathematicians and physicists. Their approach is usually relatively understandable and predictable, more so, perhaps, than the approach of Western governments.

What we must do is give the Soviets grounds for concluding that we in the West are prepared to maintain sufficient political will and military capability to ensure deterrence of any possible aggression, conventional or nuclear. We must bring them to realize that their build-up can not and will not be translated into an exploitable military or political advantage. If it turns out that we have to go for a few more years without a formal agreement limiting offensive nuclear weapons, that is undesirable, but let us not panic; we have been living with that situation for some years.

At the same time, we should hold out a better alternative, one that would produce a more stable and reliable relationship from the perspective of both sides. To this end, let me outline the strategic concept that underlies the US approach to the negotiations that began earlier this month in Geneva.

The US Strategic Concept

As I have explained elsewhere, that concept can be summarized in four sentences:

> During the next ten years, the US objective is a radical reduction in the power of existing and planned offensive nuclear arms, as well as the stabilization of the relationship between offensive and defensive nuclear arms, whether on earth or in space. We are even now looking forward to a period of transition to a more stable world, with greatly reduced levels of nuclear arms and an enhanced ability to deter war based upon an increasing contribution of non-nuclear defenses against offensive nuclear arms. This period of transition could lead to the eventual elimination of all nuclear arms, both offensive and defensive. A world free of nuclear arms is an ultimate objective to which we, the Soviet Union, and all other nations can agree.

For the immediate future we will continue to base deterrence on the ultimate threat of devastating nuclear retaliation. We have little choice; today's technology provides no alternative. For now and the forseeable future, we and our allies must therefore continue to maintain a modern and effective nuclear deterrent.

We will continue to press for radical reductions in strategic and intermediate-range nuclear arms, with attention, of course, to the proper indices of limitation. Reductions can be structured so as to produce a more stable balance and reduce the risk of war. In the Geneva talks, we are prepared to consider various means of bridging differences between the US and Soviet positions in an effort to achieve equitable accords that entail real reductions.

We also remain committed to the ABM Treaty and will seek to reverse the erosion that has occured in that regime as a result of Soviet actions such as the construction of the Krasnoyarsk radar. In the longer run, however, we want to consider the possibilities of a more defense-reliant balance.

Fifteen years ago, we concluded that defenses could be overwhelmed -- at relatively less cost -- by additional offensive arms. Technology, however, has advanced considerably since then. We now see the possibility that new defensive systems might lead to a more stable and reliable strategic balance, and ultimately, might provide the means by which we could move with confidence toward the complete elimination of nuclear arms.

In March 1983 President Reagan questioned whether we should confine ourselves to a future in which deterrence rests solely on the threat of offensive nuclear retaliation. His Strategic Defense Initiative research program was therefore given the task of determining the feasibility of effective defenses against nuclear ballistic missiles. This includes possible defenses based both on earth and in space. The President has directed that the program be carried out in full compliance with the ABM Treaty. Its object is to provide the basis for an informed decision, sometime in the next decade, as to the feasiblity of providing for a defense of the United States and our allies against ballistic missile attack.

We expect the Soviets will continue their investigation of new defensive technologies. Indeed, the debate over SDI has often lost sight of the fact that the Soviets, besides having the only operational ABM system, have long had a major research effort devoted to advanced ballistic missile defense technologies, including high energy lasers and particle beam weapons.

Should new defensive technologies prove feasible and meet our criteria, we would want at a future date to begin a transition to a balance in which we would place greater reliance on defensive systems for our protection and that of our allies. Such defenses could enhance deterrence by creating excessive complications for an aggressor's planning for a possible first strike, thereby lessening the chance that he might seriously contemplate it.

Let me note that the criteria by which we will judge the feasibility of new technologies will be demanding. They must produce defensive systems that are reasonably survivable; if not, the defenses could themselves be tempting targets for a first strike. This would decrease, rather than enhance, stability.

New defensive systems must also be cost-effective at the margin, that is, it must be cheaper to add additional defensive capability than it is for the other side to add the offensive capability necessary to overcome the defense. If this criterion is not met, the defensive systems could encourage a proliferation of countermeasures and additional offensive weapons to overcome deployed defenses, instead of a redirection of effort from offense to defense.

As I have said, these criteria are demanding. But they are necessary if we are to move toward a more stable balance at lower levels of arms. While our SDI research program will seek technical answers to technical questions, we are simultaneously examining the broader strategic implications of moving toward a more defense-reliant balance.

If the new technologies cannot meet the standards we have set, and thus not contribute to enhancing stability, we would not deploy them. In that event, we would have to continue to base deterrence largely on the ultimate threat of nuclear retaliation, though hopefully at lower levels of arms. However, we have high expectations that the scientific and technical communities can respond to the challenge.

Let me be clear that SDI is not an attempt to achieve superiority. Through any transition our goal would be to maintain balance. President Reagan has made clear that any future decision to deploy new defenses against ballistic missiles would be a matter for negotiation.

This does not mean a Soviet veto over our defense programs; rather our commitment to negotiation reflects a recognition that we should seek to move forward in a cooperative manner with the Soviets. We have thus offered to begin discussions even now in Geneva with the Soviets as to the implications of new defensive technologies, whether developed by them or by us, and how we might together manage a transition to a more stable and reliable strategic relationship based on an increasing contribution of defensive systems in the mix of offense and defense.

Of course, arms control would play an important role in such a transition. Properly structured cuts in offensive arms are not only worthwhile in their own right, they could also facilitate the shift to a more defense-reliant posture.

Before negotiating such a cooperative transition with the Soviet Union, and throughout the transition period, we would consult fully with our allies. Such a transition would continue for some time, perhaps for decades. As the US and Soviet strategic and intermediate-range nuclear arsenals declined significantly, we would seek to negotiate reductions in other types of nuclear weapons and involve, in some manner, the other nuclear powers.

Given the right technical and political conditions, we would hope to be able to continue the reduction of all nuclear weapons down to zero.

By necessity, this is a very long-term goal. Its realization would, of course, have far-reaching implications for the global military balance at all levels. For example, the deterrent effect of nuclear weapons has helped to prevent conventional as well as nuclear conflict. Were we to move to a situation in which nuclear weapons had been eliminated, the need for a stable conventional balance would become even more important than today.

We would have to devote particular attention and effort to how, together with our allies, we might counter and diminish the threat posed by conventional arms imbalances, through both conventional arms improvements and arms control efforts. Clearly, were we able to move cooperatively with the Soviet Union toward a nuclear-free world, that would presuppose a more cooperative overall relationship than exists at present -- one in which efforts to establish a conventional balance at lower levels should also be fruitful.

The global elimination of nuclear weapons, if this were ever to become possible, would need to be accompanied by widespread deployments of effective non-nuclear defenses. These defenses would provide assurance that were some country to cheat, for example, by clandestinely building ICBMs or shorter range systems, such as SS-20s, it would not be able to achieve an exploitable military advantage. To overcome the deployed defenses, cheating would have to be conducted on a large scale -- of too great a magnitude to pass unnoticed before appropriate countermeasures could be taken.

Were we to reach the ultimate phase, deterrence would be based on the ability of the defense to deny success to a potential aggressor's attack -- whether nuclear or conventional. The strategic relationship could then be characterized as one of mutual assured security.

Conclusion

Having thus outlined our strategic concept for the future, let me offer some comments.

In the 1950s, total nuclear disarmament was the declared objective of both sides, but it was wholly impractical. Among other reasons, in an uncertain world, neither side could have the confidence necessary seriously to consider abandoning its nuclear weapons; defenses against them seemed impossible. Emerging defensive technologies may provide the hedge that we need to move away from primary reliance on nuclear weapons. I frankly do not see any way in which we could consider eventually moving toward extremely deep cuts in offensive nuclear arms -- and their ultimate elimination -- without some means to protect against cheating and other contingencies.

Let me caution, however, that for the forseeable future -- that is, in the near term and even in the early and intermediate stages of any possible transition -- offensive nuclear arms and the threat of massive destructive retaliation they embody will be the key element of deterrence. This situation unavoidably will obtain for many many years.

Let me also emphasize that the concept I have outlined is wholly consistent with deterrence. Not only in the near term, but in both the transition and ultimate phases as well, deterrence would continue to provide the basis for the US-Soviet strategic relationship.

As I said at the beginning of my remarks, deterrence requires that a potential opponent be convinced that the problems, risks and costs of aggression far outweigh the gains he might hope to achieve. A popular view of deterrence is that it is almost solely a matter of posing to an aggressor high potential costs through the ultimate threat of devastating nuclear retaliation.

But deterrence can also function effectively if one has the ability, through defense and other military means, to deny the attacker the gains he might otherwise have hoped to realize. Our hope and intent is to shift the deterrent balance from one which is based primarily on the punitive threat of devastating nuclear retaliation to one in which nuclear arms are greatly reduced on both sides and non-nuclear defenses play a greater and greater role. We believe this would provide a far sounder basis for a stable and reliable strategic relationship, and for a real reduction in the risk of war.

The concept I have outlined embodies much that is old and some things that are new. It requires that we rethink some of our strategic policy, and we should not shy away from doing so. Reducing the risk of war is a goal of vital importance to both the West and East. We should examine all ways by which we can advance that goal, with clear, objective and open minds. This includes frank discussion between allies. This is the manner in which our coalition of democracies must work; I am confident that together we will make the right choices.

Thank you.